

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 2 have been combined; thus, independent claim 1 specifies that the piercing step "is performed respectively for sub-blocks obtained by dividing the cells at the end surface of the sub regions." Claim 2 has been canceled; the claims before the Examiner for consideration are claims 1 and 3 to 6.

The rejection of claims 1 to 4 and 6 under 35 USC 102 as allegedly anticipated by Ogawa et al. '193, if applied to the claims as amended, is respectfully traversed. The Final Rejection contained no discussion of where in the reference one found disclosure regarding the sub-block piercing operation recited in claim 2. Applicants respectfully submit that the reference in no way teaches such a step.

The patentability of the claims as revised is further supported by the enclosed Declaration Under 37 CFR 1.132 of joint inventor Akio Enomoto. That Declaration reports the results of tests carried out among honeycomb body manufacturing methods involving a no correction method, the sub-block correction method recited in claim 1, and a correction method involving all cells. The advantages of the present invention are clearly shown and explained in the Declaration. The Examiner is directed to the time differences shown in Table 1 on

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page 2 of the declaration and Mr. Enomoto's further comments at (iv) (f) and (iv) (g). The rejection should be withdrawn.

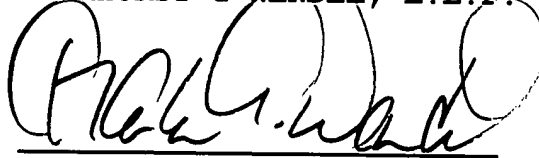
The rejection of claim 5 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Ogawa et al. '193 in view of Bonzo '773 is also respectfully traversed. Claim 5 depends from claim 1 and is patentable for the reasons given above in the traverse of the rejection under 35 USC 102.

In view of the foregoing revisions and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 3 to 6 are in immediate condition for allowance and a USPTO paper to those ends is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned if additional changes are required in the case prior to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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June 14, 1984
Date

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Enclosure: Declaration Under 37 CFR 1.132

Attorney Docket No.: NSUG:854

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